

ASSEMBLY BILL

No. 2583

**Introduced by Assembly Member Dababneh
(Principal coauthor: Assembly Member Mansoor)
(Coauthor: Assembly Member Lowenthal)**

February 21, 2014

An act to add Section 16000.8 to the Welfare and Institutions Code, relating to foster care.

LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL'S DIGEST

AB 2583, as introduced, Dababneh. Foster parent evaluations.

Under existing law, it is the policy of the state that all children in foster care have specified rights, including the right to live in a safe, healthy, and comfortable home where they are treated with respect, the right to be free from physical, sexual, emotional, or other abuse, or corporal punishment, and the right to receive adequate and healthy food, adequate clothing, and medical, dental, vision, and mental health services.

This bill would require the State Department of Social Services, in consultation with the County Welfare Directors Association, foster parents, caregivers, and current and former foster youth, to develop and implement a foster parent evaluation process. The bill would require that evaluation process to include a process to allow foster youth over 12 years of age and nonminor dependents to provide feedback on the quality of care received in licensed or certified foster homes and group homes at least once per year and upon any exit from those homes. The bill would also require the evaluation process to include the development of an evaluation tool in partnership with current and former foster youth and caregivers that allows youth to provide feedback on the quality of

care received, as specified, including feedback on the caregivers' honoring of the rights of foster youth. The bill would require the department to implement the foster parent evaluation process and promulgate all necessary regulations pursuant to this provision on or before January 1, 2016.

Vote: majority. Appropriation: no. Fiscal committee: yes.

State-mandated local program: no.

The people of the State of California do enact as follows:

1 SECTION 1. Section 16000.8 is added to the Welfare and
2 Institutions Code, to read:

3 16000.8. (a) The State Department of Social Services, in
4 consultation with the County Welfare Directors Association, foster
5 parents, caregivers, and current and former foster youth, shall
6 develop and implement a foster parent evaluation process.

7 (b) The evaluation process shall include, but is not limited to,
8 all of the following:

9 (1) A process to allow foster youth over 12 years of age and
10 nonminor dependents to provide feedback on the quality of care
11 received in licensed or certified foster homes and group homes at
12 least once per year and upon any exit from those homes.

13 (2) The development of an evaluation tool in partnership with
14 current and former foster youth and caregivers that allows the
15 youth to provide feedback on quality of care received, including,
16 but not limited to, feedback on all of the following:

17 (A) The caregiver's participation in implementing the youth's
18 case plan.

19 (B) The caregiver's provision of excellent, nurturing parenting,
20 including incorporating the youth as a full member of the family,
21 inclusion in family activities, and respect for the youth's culture,
22 religion, and ethnicity, physical or psychological needs, sexual
23 orientation, gender identification or expression, and family
24 relationships.

25 (C) The caregiver's honoring of the rights of foster youth.

26 (D) The extent to which the caregiver respects and supports the
27 youth's ties to his or her biological family, including parents,
28 siblings, and extended family members, and assists the youth in
29 visitation and other forms of communication.

1 (E) The caregiver's advocacy for the youth with the child
2 welfare system and community agencies, including schools and
3 health and mental health providers.

4 (F) The caregiver's participation in the youth's medical,
5 psychological, and dental care, including scheduling regular health
6 and mental health exams and coordinating transportation for the
7 youth.

8 (G) The caregiver's encouragement and support of the youth's
9 educational goals and school success, including participation in
10 school activities and meetings, including Individualized Education
11 Plan meetings, as appropriate, assisting with school assignments,
12 tutoring, meeting with teachers, including back to school nights
13 and other school events, and working with an educational
14 representative or surrogate, if one has been appointed.

15 (H) The caregiver's provision of developmentally appropriate
16 opportunities to allow the youth to learn and practice life skills
17 and have hands-on experiences in preparation for transition to
18 adulthood, including participation in family and rulemaking
19 decisions, cooking and cleaning, conflict resolution, assistance
20 with job and career exploration and development, assistance with
21 higher education and financial aid exploration and processes,
22 assistance accessing community resources, and encouragement to
23 learn principles of money management and financial planning.

24 (I) The caregiver's provision of opportunities to develop the
25 youth's interests and skills, including identifying and supporting
26 participation in extracurricular and enrichment activities.

27 (J) The caregiver's efforts to ensure any transition to foster care
28 respects the youth's developmental stage and psychological needs,
29 allows for ongoing relationships, and is consistent with court orders
30 for visitation.

31 (c) In the development of the foster parent evaluation process,
32 the department, in consultation with the stakeholders identified in
33 subdivision (a), shall consider how information gathered from
34 evaluations can inform the continuous improvement of existing
35 and future efforts to recruit, train, and retain high-quality foster
36 parents.

- 1 (d) The department shall implement the foster parent evaluation
- 2 process and promulgate all necessary regulations pursuant to this
- 3 section on or before January 1, 2016.

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